



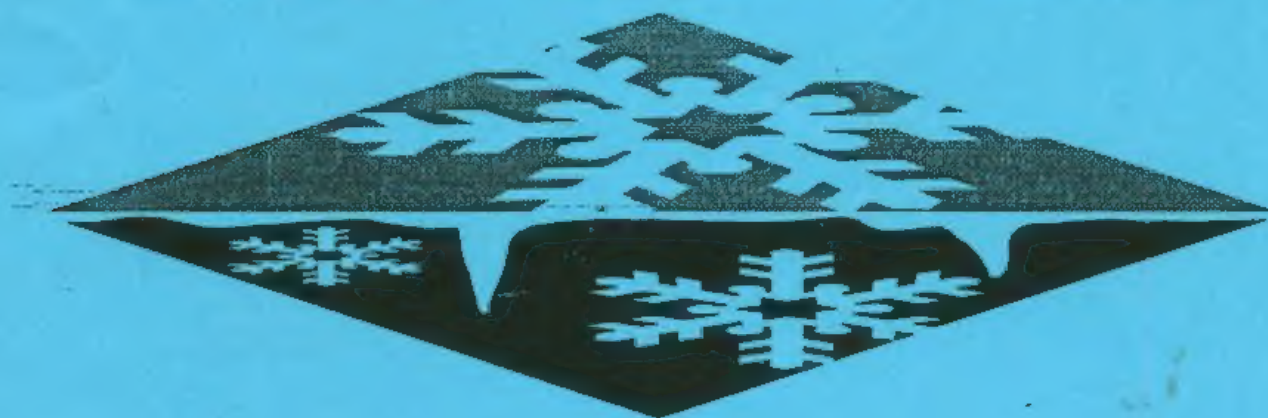
**ANCHORAGE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

**NO**

**GENERAL MEETING ON FRIDAY JANUARY 1, 1999**



**BE SAFE THIS NEW YEAR. DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE**



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### AARC web page & Email contact addresses:

<http://kl7aa.akconnect.com>  
president to windsman@alaska.net  
webmaster to kl7aa@lawson.akconnect.com  
membership to frederickson@iname.com  
activities to johnlynn@gci.net

### News Letter Submissions, Information or corrections:

Submissions must be received 2 weeks before meeting  
Email: johnlynn@gci.net Facsimile: 907-338-4791  
Mail: 7013 Trafford Ave. Anchorage 99504

### KL7G CODE PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Schedule: 7:00am, 10:00am, 4:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm  
AK time, every day Frequencies: 3575 Khz, 7075 Khz &  
145.35 Mhz: Sending Speeds: 22 wpm, 15 wpm, 7 wpm

### Nets in Alaska:

The following nets are active in South-central Alaska:  
Alaska Sniper's Net 3.920 MHz 6:00 PM daily  
Alaska Bush Net 7.093 MHz 8:00 PM daily  
Alaska Motley Net 3.933 Mhz 9:00 PM daily  
Alaska Pacific Emergency Preparedness Net 14.292 MHz  
8:30 AM M-F  
QCWA net 146.97/37 repeater Sundays 8:00 PM local  
850 No Name Net 146.85/25 repeater Sundays 8:00 PM  
Son of Sideband Net 144.20 USB Mondays 9:00 PM local  
Big City Simplex Net 146.520 FM Tuesdays 8:00 PM local  
ARES net 147.30/90 Mhz Thursdays at 8:00 PM local  
PARKA net 147.30/90 Mhz Thursdays at 9:00 PM local

### Anchorage & Mat Valley Area Repeaters

KL7AA systems at Flattop Mt., 2,200 ft  
146.34/94 Mhz, 80 watts, autopatch, 100/141.3 Hz PL  
223.34/224.94, 25 watts, no patch, no PL  
444.70/449.70, 25 watts, autopatch, 100/141.3 PL  
KL7ION at Mt. Gordon Lyon 4,700 ft  
147.30/90 Mhz - 80 watts, no patch, no PL  
KL7AA, Mt. Alyeska, 2,400 ft.  
146.16/76 Mhz, 25 watts, no patch, 141.3 Hz PL  
KL7CC, Anchorage Hillside, SCRC club  
146.97/37 Mhz, autopatch, 103.5 Hz PL  
KL7DJE at Grubstake Peak, 4,500 ft.  
147.09/69 Mhz, 25 watts, no patch, 100 Hz PL  
444.925/449.925, 10 watts, no patch, 141.3 Hz PL  
KL7JFU, Palmer, MARA club  
146.85/25, autopatch, no PL  
KL7AIR Elmendorf, EARS  
147.27/87 no patch, 107.2 Hz PL  
KL7G West Anchorage & Events  
449.65/444.65 Mhz, patch, no PL

### Anchorage & Mat Valley Simplex Frequencies

146.52 Mhz Calling and Emergency frequency  
147.57 / 447.57 (crossband linked) HF spotters & chat  
146.49 Mhz Anchorage area simplex chat  
146.41 Mhz Mat Valley simplex chat

### — HOT LINKS —

Internet Web links, the favorites from our readers

AARC <http://kl7aa.akconnect.com>

SCRC <http://www.servcom.com/worcester/scrc.htm>

EARS <http://ww2.customcpu.com/kl7air/default.htm>

KL7J <http://www.alaska.net/~buchholz>

Fairbanks AARC:

<http://ffdlm1mac.uafsof.alaska.edu/aarc/aarc.html>

Yukon Amateur Radio Association:

<http://www.klondike.com/yara/index.html>

HAARP Project:

<http://server5550.itd.nrl.navy.mil/projects/haarp/>

<<Amateur Radio Reference Library>>

<http://www.area-ham.org/library/libindex.html>

Hamradio: <http://www.hamrad.com/>

Solar Terrestrial Activity <http://209.130.27.95/solar/>

ARRL <http://www.arrl.org/>

Propagation Report Recording 566-1819

*please let us know if there are other club pages or good starting points that should appear here*

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### VHF NETS ABOUND

All of you new HAMs take note: there are lots of nets and nice folks to visit with. The Son of Sideband Net runs each Monday night at 9:00 PM local on 144.200 Mhz USB with a 6 Meter extension on 50.200 Mhz USB. On Tuesday night, the Big City Simplex Net operates on 146.520 FM at 8:00 PM local with a 70cm checkin on 446.00 FM and a 6M checkin on 52.525 FM immediately following. On Thursday the ARES net starts at 8:00 PM on the 147.30/.90 repeater with Amateur News line followed at 9:00 PM by the PARKA net. On Sunday there are two nets at the same time. In Anchorage, the QCWA net runs at 8:00 PM on the 146.97/.37 repeater (103.5 Hz PL) and in the valley the 850 No Name Net runs on the 146.85/.25 repeater.

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### This Month's Speaker

### NO NO NO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO BE HELD THIS MONTH.

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**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:** All articles from members and interested persons are very welcome. If you wish to submit any articles, jokes, cartoons, please have it typed or neatly handwritten. It can be submitted by computer disk, fax, or E-mail to the newsletter editor at the address listed on the cover. Submissions must be in the hands of the editor at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

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### Regular HAM Gatherings:

\* **Tuesdays, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM:** Join the gang for lunch and an eyeball QSO at the Royal Fork, Penland Park, East.

**Saturdays, 7:30 AM:** Here is a great way to get started on the week-end come and meet with some of the locals and have a great breakfast at Phillips Restaurant, at the corner of Arctic and International. Great Fun.

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### ABACUS RADIO REPAIR

Factory authorized service for: Kenwood, ICOM, Yaesu, Alinco, Amateur radio equipment.

Call Jim Wiley, KL7CC (907) 338-0662

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### THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

**January 1: NO ARRC general meeting at 7:00 PM** There will not be a general meeting this month. Meeting will continue on the first Friday of each month beginning in February, 1999.

**January 9: VE License Exams 6:30 PM** Carr-Gottstein Building, APU Campus. Bring photo ID, copy of license (if any) and any certificates of completion.

**January 9: ARES Planning Committee 9:30 AM.** Conference Room at BP Exploration. Everyone welcome. Focusing on preparedness and training.

**January 9: VE License Exams.** Hope Cottage Offices, 540 W. International in the Board Room. At 2:00 PM. Be sure to bring photo ID, copy of license (if any) and any certificates of completion.

**January 8: SCRC general meeting at 7:00 PM** room 220, Business Ed. Bldg., UAA campus. Talk in on 147.57 simplex.

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### ARRL DIRECTOR MARY LOU BROWN, NM7N, DIES SUDDENLY:

#### *Newsline*

Northwestern Division Director Mary Lou Brown, NM7N, of Anacortes, Washington, died December, 1998. She was 71. Brown was just re-elected without opposition to a new two-year term on the ARRL Board. Her husband, Bob, NM7M, reports that Director Brown collapsed and died at Los Angeles International Airport, apparently after suffering a heart attack. She was returning from Australia where she had

just taken part in the Lord Howe Island, VK9LX, DXpedition.

DXpedition member Nick Hacko, VK2ICV, said Brown was "the most-liked person" on the DXpedition. "Although I knew Mary Lou for only a few days, it was very clear to me and to the other Lord Howe operators that she was an exceptional person," he said in an Internet posting after learning of her death. He said Brown helped out with all phases of the operation and deserved "a lot of credit for helping the rest of us get a great lot of enjoyment out of our trip."

Brown has been the ARRL Northwestern Division Director since 1995 and was a vice director from 1990 through 1994. She also served as a member of the ARRL Executive Committee. ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, said Brown was held "in the highest possible esteem" by her peers on the ARRL Board. He noted that Brown was elected to the Executive Committee after just one year as a director, and was re-elected twice. "Her enthusiasm for Amateur Radio extended beyond organizational affairs to on-the-air operating, especially operating with friends," he said.

Northwestern Division Vice Director Greg Milnes, W7AGQ, accedes to the position of Director. Milnes also was just re-elected to a new two-year term. The vacancy in the position of Vice Director will be filled in due course by appointment by President Rod Stafford, W6ROD.

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#### **CODE PRACTICE STATION ADDS 40 METER OUTLET** *SCRC Newsletter*

As of December 7th, the KL7G code practice station is operating on both 3575 and 7075 KHz in the HF bands. This experimental (40 meter) transmission will continue for a time to determine if the additional channel helps HF listeners receive the code practice transmissions during times when propagation is marginal on 80 meters. Both the 80 and 40 meter transmitters are running about 100 watts RF output. The 500 watt amplifier we were using on 80 meters has gone to that great DX-pedition in the sky, and may not be able to be repaired (parts are no longer available). There are plans afoot to see if we can get a benefactor to fund two new solid-state amps, one for each band. The 40 meter station is using (for the time being) a Kenwood TS-130 transceiver and an inverted vee antenna about 40 feet high. The 40 meter frequency is 7075 KHz, and the transmitter is crystal controlled.

Reception reports would be appreciated (for both HF and VHF ). Send them to Jim, KL7CC, at his e-mail address: [jwiley@alaska.net](mailto:jwiley@alaska.net)

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#### **FCC LEVIES HEFTY FINE ON JERSEY HAM**

*Worldradio*

The FCC has levied a \$7500 fine on a New Jersey ham who interfered with a net operation on 40 meter SSB. James C. Thompson, KA2YBP, of Waretown also was ordered off 40 meters until further notice after the October 18 incident. The case against Thompson, 58, stemmed from interference complaints from other amateurs, including the Association of North American Radio Clubs (ANARC), which conducts a Sunday morning net on 7240 kHz.

The FCC charged Thompson with illegally retransmitting programs from a Standard Broadcast (AM) station on 40 meters and willfully interfering with the net. The FCC also said Thompson failed to properly identify.

The FCC issued an Official Notice of Violation October 21. In replying to the NOV, Thompson admitted the violations, the FCC said November 9. "Applying the Forfeiture Policy Statement and statutory factors to the instant case, we have determined that a monetary forfeiture in the amount of \$7,500 is warranted," the FCC's notice said. Thompson has 30 days to pay the fine or appeal it.

The Thompson case marked the Commission's first amateur enforcement action since the FCC announced it would consolidate amateur enforcement within the Compliance and Information Bureau. The CIB's legal advisor for enforcement, Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, says he's spoken with near 100 individuals about enforcement complaints or issues since the FCC's latest enforcement initiative began. The FCC expects additional amateur enforcement cases to develop as a result of calls to the Amateur Enforcement Line, 202-418-1184.

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#### **FCC SHUTS DOWN FOUR HF PIRATES**

*Worldradio*

The FCC has shut down four unauthorized HF broadcasters in Massachusetts, Illinois, Texas, and California. The stations all transmitted on 6955 kHz. Two of the operators are radio amateurs, according to an FCC spokesperson, who said the ham licenses "are definitely in jeopardy." The two hams were identified as 41-year-old Richard F. Jurens, KC5RGK, a Technician licensee who lives in Katy, Texas, and 46-year-old Henry Lee "Hank" Landsberg, WB6MEU, an Advanced class licensee who lives in Sierra Madre, California. The names of the others cited were being withheld pending further official action.

In making the busts, the FCC's Columbia, Maryland Operations Center coordinated and provided information to FCC agents from the Boston, Chicago, Houston and Los

Angeles offices. FCC inspectors from those offices then performed on-site visits to the unauthorized stations.

With the exception of certain low-power Part 15 devices, broadcasting on the HF bands is not authorized without a station license. Under the Communications Act, violators may be subject to penalties up to \$11,000 and the equipment used may be seized and forfeited by court order. Unlicensed operators also face criminal fines of up to \$100,000 and/or imprisonment for up to one year, or both, for a first time offense.

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## **FCC SETS ASIDE FOUR EXTRA CLASS GRANTS**

*Worldradio*

The FCC has notified four individuals that it is setting aside their recent Extra Class license grants and privileges while it investigates alleged irregularities in the volunteer examination process. Letters from the FCC went out November 10 to Elmer J. Smith, N3UNR, of Effort, Pennsylvania; Philip DiGenova, N3UNS, of Bartonsville, Pennsylvania; Wayne S. Bowden, AA3RT, of Millsboro, Delaware; and Kenneth L. Sharp, AA3RU, of Boyertown, Pennsylvania, that the Commission was setting aside their Extra Class grants. All four individuals were requested to return their Extra Class license documents and Certificates of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCEs) to the FCC's Gettysburg office.

"This letter is not a finding that you have engaged in misconduct," the letter said, adding that if the FCC's investigation concludes that it should grant the Extra Class license applications, it will reinstate the grants.

An FCC official said the investigation was looking into testing irregularities including allegations that examinees might have been coached or given test answers. "They are bumped back for now while we investigate, since we had enough evidence at the outset to do that," he said.

For the time being at least, Smith and DiGenova have been bumped back to Technician class licensees, while Sharp will revert to Advanced class and his former N3TPN call sign. All three took their examinations October 6 at a W5YI-VEC session in Warminster, Pennsylvania. Bowden apparently never held a ham ticket prior to taking the examination elements for Extra Class at Spring City, Pennsylvania, on October 4 during a W5YI-VEC testing session. The call sign AA3RT no longer appears in the FCC database. The records of the other three amateurs involved were modified November 10.

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## **FBI ARRESTS GEORGIA HAM FOR INTERFERING WITH AIRCRAFT COMMUNICATION**

*Worldradio*

The FCC, the FAA, and the FBI have announced the arrest of a Georgia ham for allegedly interfering with radio communication between aircraft and air traffic controllers in Northern Georgia. An FBI statement issued this week said that Kevin M. Kelly, N2BYE, an Advanced class licensee, was arrested without incident November 6 at his Cumming, Georgia, home by FBI agents accompanied by FAA and FCC agents. The arrest followed a search of Kelly's residence.

Kelly was charged in a criminal complaint with four counts of breaking federal law prohibiting knowingly interfering with the operation of a "true light" or signal used at an air navigation facility. The FBI said its case stemmed from FAA reports of "sporadic and momentary radio frequency interference" between aircraft and air traffic controller communications. The FBI said an extensive investigation showed the RF interference to be coming from the Hyde Park Subdivision in Cumming where Kelly lived.

The FBI described Kelly, 46, as "a highly experienced electronics engineer" who was said to have been "extremely upset" about air traffic noise above his home. Kelly was scheduled to appear November 9 before a US magistrate in Atlanta.

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## **LEAGUE FILES "RESTRUCTURING" COMMENTS WITH FCC**

*Worldradio*

The ARRL has filed formal comments in response to the FCC's proposed streamlining of the Amateur Radio rules. The League delivered its comments to the FCC December 1, the final day for comments in the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in WT Docket 98-143.

The League's filing promotes the ARRL Board of Directors' restructuring positions, adopted last July and fine-tuned at a special meeting in October. It also takes the FCC to task on a few points. The ARRL said the FCC's NPRM failed to contain "a comprehensive restructuring proposal or even an overall review of license restructuring" and generally "missed the mark."

The League called on the FCC to adopt the ARRL Board's restructuring plans as the centerpiece of its streamlining efforts. Among other things, the League plan calls for eliminating the Novice and Tech Plus licenses to reduce the number of license classes from six to four. The ARRL plan automatically upgrades current Novice and Tech Plus licensees to General. The General license would become the entry-level ticket to HF. Existing Novice and Tech Plus HF

CW bands would be "refarmed" to provide additional phone spectrum for General, Advanced, and Extra class licensees.

The FCC also proposed a four-tier license structure, eliminating the Novice ticket and melding existing Technician and Tech Plus licensees into a common database while allowing current Novices and Tech Pluses to retain their current operating privileges. The ARRL said the FCC was on "the right track" in proposing to eliminate the Novice ticket. But the League said its "instant upgrade" plan for Novice and Tech Plus operators is a better approach because it permits "refarming" the underutilized Novice HF subbands. The League called refarming "critical to any comprehensive license restructuring proposal."

The FCC's NPRM sought comments on the issue of Morse code testing and requirements but offered no specific proposals. The ARRL called for a reduction in the number of Morse code examination tiers from three to two (5 and 12 WPM) and changes in the written examinations to make them more relevant and with greater emphasis on current operating practices and newer digital technologies. The League also recommended that the number of written exam questions "increase incrementally" for all license classes above Technician.

The League said that Morse code should not be overemphasized in the licensing process, but should be continued as a licensing requirement above the entry level. It has proposed that General class applicants pass a 5 WPM code test, while Advanced and Extra applicants pass the 12 WPM code test. Subsequent to release of its original restructuring plan, the ARRL Board also decided to ask the FCC to permit Technician operators to use Morse code on the General class HF CW segments without passing a specific code examination.

The ARRL said acknowledged abuses of the CW disability exemption process were an enforcement, not a testing, issue. For those claiming a disability waiver for the higher-speed CW test, the League urged testing accommodations as a preferable alternative. The League also urged an end to multiple-choice CW exams and rules specifying that a passing grade for a Morse examination be either 70 percent correct answers to 10 fill-in questions or one minute out of five of solid copy.

The League also praised the "new dawn" in amateur enforcement undertaken within the Compliance and Information Bureau by Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH. The ARRL suggested that it would be "reasonable to withhold any further [rulemaking] action on amateur enforcement" for now and let the CIB continue its work.

A complete copy of the ARRL's comments in WT Docket 98-143 is available on ARRLWeb at: <http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring/>

(see "ARRL's Comments to the FCC on WT Docket 98-143"). Reply comments on the FCC's rulemaking proposals are due January 15, 1999. The FCC is not expected to take action restructuring at least until sometime next spring.

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## FCC PULLS GENERAL UPGRADE

### *Worldradio*

The FCC has pulled back a General Class upgrade from a Kentucky ham because it says the Physician's Certification used to obtain a Morse code testing waiver "is not a valid document." The FCC notified Richard C. Lalone II, KC5GAX, of Fort Campbell, Kentucky, of its action by certified mail November 18. But the Commission stopped short of revoking his license or levying a fine.

An FCC official said that Lalone upgraded at a test session in January 1997. "The doctor's certificate was apparently forged," he said. "The doctor confirmed that he didn't sign it. It wasn't the VEC's fault." The FCC official said Lalone had "let it slip" to another amateur that the certificate was forged and that Lalone failed to answer correspondence from the FCC inquiring into the matter. A former Texas resident, Lalone, 34, has been told he may no longer operate under General class privileges, his amateur privileges have been returned to Tech Plus, and he has been issued a new license document. The FCC said Lalone's privileges reverted to Tech Plus as of November 23. The FCC advised Lalone that while it was not pursuing a fine at this time, he could run into problems later if he decides to renew his ticket or to upgrade. At that point, the Commission said, it might later decide to designate the issue for a hearing before an administrative law judge, "in order for the Commission to determine what, if any, enforcement action should be taken and what action to take on the application."

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## Upgrades held by FCC

### *Newsline*

The FCC has temporarily set aside four amateurs' recent Extra Class license grants and privileges while it investigates alleged irregularities in the volunteer examination process that might affect them.

Letters went out on Tuesday November 10, 1998 to Elmer Smith, N3UNR, of Effort, PA; Philip DiGenova, N3UNS, of Bartonsville, PA; Wayne Bowden, AA3RT, of Millsboro, DE; and Kenneth L. Sharp, AA3RU, of Boyertown, PA. The letters request all four individuals return their Extra Class license documents and Certificates of Successful Completion of Examination to the FCC's License Processing facility in Gettysburg Pennsylvania.

An FCC official said they are looking into testing irregularities including allegations that some examinees might have been coached or given test answers. The FCC also goes to great pains to let the four amateurs know they are not being accused of any wrong-doing. The letter goes as far as telling each of the applicants the correspondence is not in any way a finding that anyone has engaged in misconduct. If the investigation conclude that it should grant their Extra Class license applications, they will be reinstated.

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**Leonids provide thrill of a lifetime**  
*ARRL Letter*

Hours of lost sleep were a small sacrifice to the many VHF and UHF enthusiasts who got the thrill of a lifetime working meteor scatter during the Leonid shower November 16-18, 1998. "For nearly all radio operators, it was spectacular," enthused Shelby Ennis, W8WN, of Elizabethtown, Kentucky. "This was the year of the fireballs.

Ennis and others also seem to agree that this was the year for long-distance contacts, possibly a few record-setting ones. "My biggest thrill was working Vermont on 2 Meters, which is over 1400 miles," said Larry Lambert, N0LL, who lives in northern Kansas. He said he encountered one "burn", or trail, that lasted nine minutes, during which he was able to work 11 stations.

Most, if not all, agree that the Leonids showed up a bit earlier than predicted, and this year's event was a shower, not a storm. Some predicted next year will be "the big one" that some had thought might happen this time around. Even so, all reports indicate gratifying results for those who participated in the event.

While high-speed CW has been the preferred mode for meteor scatter contacts, Ennis said that as a result of the numerous long-bringing fireballs this time, SSB turned out to be "much more effective than HSCW." Ennis said HSCW worked best for times prior to the shower's peak, but SSB was "far more effective" once long bursts begin to appear.

Some stations were able to put several new grid squares, states and even countries into their logbooks. During the two days he operated, Bill Mitchell, K0WLU, in Minnesota, logged 124 stations in 99 grid squares on 2 Meters, using both SSB and CW and running just 90 watts into Cushcraft 17B2 antenna. He operated for several hours on emergency power after he lost electricity at his house.

Arliss Thompson, W7XU, in South Dakota, reported "exceptionally good" conditions on the morning of November 16th. "I hope I'm around in another 33 years!" he said. Thompson worked several new grids and states on the bands from 50 MHz to 432 MHz, including his first-ever 432

meteor-scatter QSO with Patrick Coker, N6RMI, in Lancaster, California, possibly a record at 2036 km (for his part, N6RMI reported dozens of MS contacts on 6 Meters through 70 cm). The 144.200 MHz gathering spot on 2 Meters had "so many signals that we couldn't copy anyone," Thompson said, expressing appreciation to those who moved off the calling channel to clear the congestion.

The Russian Mir space station and communication satellites came through the Leonid shower unscathed. The two cosmonauts aboard Mir took refuge in the Soyuz escape spacecraft during the peak of the meteor shower. During an earlier space walk, they had installed a meteorite trap to possibly catch some of the debris.

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**Virginia antenna law**  
*David Splitt, KE3VV*

In a recent battle, fought in the stately legislative halls of Richmond, determined Ham operators pushed hard and won passage of Senate bill 480, entitled "Placement of Amateur Radio Antennas." On July 1, 1998, the bill became law and was codified as section 15.2-2293.1 of the Virginia Code.

The law provides that "any ordinance involving the placement, screening, or height of antennas shall reasonably accommodate Amateur Radio antennas and shall impose the minimum regulation necessary to accomplish the locality's legitimate purpose. In localities having a population density of 120 persons or less per square mile according to the 1990 United States census, no local ordinance shall (ia) restrict Amateur Radio antenna height to less than 200 feet above ground level as permitted by the Federal Communications Commission or (iia) restrict the number of support structures. In localities having a population density of more than 120 persons per square mile according to the 1990 United States census, no local ordinance shall (ib) restrict amateur Radio antenna height to less than seventy-five feet above around level or (iib) restrict the number of support structures. Reasonable and customary engineering practices shall be followed in the erection of Amateur Radio antennas. This section shall not preclude any locality, by ordinance, from regulating Amateur Radio antennas with regard to reasonable requirements relating to the use of screening, setback, placement, and health and safety requirements."

Proponents of the bill might have expected less of a fight over the law's modest provisions because the language was crafted to follow the federal preemption policy adopted by the FCC in 1985.

Instead they were confronted by powerful lobby groups opposing any intrusion over local domination of antenna regulation. There have been a few other states, such as Massachusetts, that have enacted similar laws, but none have

been "easy wins" and most have left plenty of room for disagreement over specific implementation issues.

In addition, none of these state preemption laws have any impact whatsoever on the significant number of Hams (and potential Hams) who live in apartments, condos, coops, or single family dwellings controlled by restrictive lease provisions and deed covenants. The Virginia law and others like it apply only to local ordinances, such as zoning and building codes, as well as fire and safety regulations. Your local homeowners association can continue to force you to tear down even a modest, barely visible dipole or refuse to allow you to put up that lovely, though discreet, vertical. Towers and Yagis? Just forget it.

Most amateurs observing the battles over these laws and everyday enforcement struggles are puzzled. Don't the FCC resolve this issue in favor of Hams? What about the federal policy that encourages Amateur Radio and frowns on local restrictions? The answer can be found by taking a closer look at what the FCC actually did in September 1985.

It's been 13 years since the FCC adopted the declaratory ruling the Ham community refers to as PRB-1. Officially, FCC Memorandum and Order 85-506, was entitled "Federal Preemption of State and Local Regulations Pertaining to Amateur Radio Facilities." Unfortunately, it was much more of a memo than an order.

The ARRL petition filed in July 1984, had sought an explicit statement that would preempt local ordinances that "preclude or significantly inhibit effective, reliable Amateur Radio communications." What Amateur Radio got was a vaguely worded, virtually toothless directive. There is a lot of verbiage in the FCC's opinion that supports Amateur Radio and touts the reasons for limiting local interference, but the part of PRB-1 that actually "orders" anything states simply that "local regulations which involve placement, screening, or height or antennas based on health, safety, or aesthetic considerations must be crafted to accommodate reasonably amateur communications, and to represent the minimum practicable regulation to accomplish the local authority's legitimate purpose."

The FCC itself called PRB-1 a "limited preemption policy," and added that it lacked the staff and resources to review state and local laws affecting amateur antennas. At this point, Joe Heller's Yossarian would have undoubtedly begun muttering something about "Catch-22," and he would have been correct. While using the magic word "preemption," the FCC was really suggesting local and state governments, recognizing the looming shadow of federal interest, would actually preempt themselves.

The FCC said: "We are confident that state and local governments will endeavor to legislate in a manner that affords appropriate recognition to the important federal

interest at stake here and thereby avoid unnecessary conflict with federal policy, as well as time-consuming and expensive litigation in this area."

Taking this bit of wishful thinking one step further, PRB-1 admitted that real preemption would require a lot more than a press release and copies of PRB-1 sent to state and local government officials. The FCC advised amateur operators dissatisfied with antenna restrictions to "use this document to bring our policies to the attention of local tribunals and forums." In other words, get yourself a lawyer and a team of lobbyist and do the best you can. As a preemption, PRB-1 is strictly "do-it-yourself."

While PRB-1 has offered some support for Hams like those in Virginia who are politically astute and willing to fight tax-supported local governments and well-heeled private interest, universal relief from antenna restrictions is an unfulfilled promise. In addition, the FCC's position on private, contractual antenna limitations has been strictly "hands-off." In a footnote to PRB-1, the FCC said that "our ruling herein does not reach restrictive covenants in private contractual agreements. Such agreements are voluntarily entered into by the buyer or tenant when the agreement is executed and do not usually concern this Commission."

Amateurs may be getting some help in this issue based on the heavy duty flout of the satellite TV industry. In next month's column, we'll take a closer look at the true extent of federal authority over local ordinances and private contracts restricting amateur antennas, as well as some very recent developments in applying federal preemption that may provide more leverage than PRB-1 for amateurs who can't quite make the DXCC honor roll by loading up gutters or operating mobile in the driveway

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#### **COOPERATION CURBS "WIRELESS MODEM" QRM** *ARRL Letter v. 17 #50*

A maker of "wireless modems" and a cable TV company that's been installing the units across the US have told the ARRL they'll do whatever it takes to keep the devices from causing interference to amateur HF bands. The ARRL contacted the two companies after receiving reports from members of the Northern California Contest Club about 80-meter interference from the devices. The devices, manufactured overseas by Phonex Corporation of Midvale, Utah, operate under Part 15 of the FCC's rules. This means that they may not cause interference to licensed services.

"Although the Phonex has complied with required FCC regulations, the ARRL has identified a potential interference problem on the low end of the 80-meter band," said Phonex Senior Engineer Scott Bullock, KK7LC. "We have several

hams in our organization, and we do not want to cause any interference to any amateur band."

Wireless modems are first cousins to wireless telephone jacks used to provide additional telephone jacks without wiring. Both are sold in pairs. One unit plugs into the telephone connection while the other serves as a telephone or modem jack; both plug into convenient AC outlets. The carrier-current devices impose RF on the power line to transmit data back and forth in the form of wideband FM.

Other units made by Phonex and sold as wireless extension telephone jacks under other brand names operate on 3.025 and 6.436 MHz, where they generally will not affect the ham bands. Unfortunately, the Phonex wireless modems operate on 3.52 and 8.27 MHz. Cable giant TCI has been installing these units in some subscribers' homes to make a convenient connection from the cable box to the telephone line to transmit billing information. Wireless modems transmit a continuous carrier on the lower frequency, whether the phone connection is in use or not, and on both frequencies when the remote line is in use.

ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI, says the League received reports in mid-December about persistent interference on the low end of 80 meters and on other bands. The interference, consisting of discrete, somewhat noisy and drifting carriers, typically showed up around 3520 to 3530 kHz, but harmonics have been reported as high as 20 meters. ARRL Lab tests verified that the devices pose a serious QRM problem on the lower part of 80 meters and possibly on other bands.

FCC rules permit the unlicensed devices to radiate signals on HF of up to 30 uV/meter, even on an amateur band. Device operators—TCI in this case—must correct any resulting interference, however.

TCI Senior Engineer Tony Werner said TCI plans to eliminate the 3.52 MHz wireless jacks it's installed "as expediently as possible" by replacing them with 3.3 MHz units or by running a hardwired telephone connection. TCI will immediately replace units that cause interference and automatically replace other 3.52-MHz units during routine customer service and plans to use nothing but 3.3-MHz units in the future. Hams experiencing harmful interference they believe is related to these devices should contact their local TCI office. TCI says it will be at least a few weeks before it has service information and replacement units on hand.

Phonex says it's made the necessary production changes to move the operating frequency of its units to 3.3 MHz. If one of its units causes interference, he said, Phonex will retune or replace it. Hams can contact Phonex Customer Service at 800-437-0101.

"Both companies have been refreshingly cooperative," said Hare, who—as his W1RFI call sign reflects—is the League's point man for interference issues. "If every RFI problem that involves Amateur Radio could be fixed so quickly, I would probably be out of a job."

Hare said hams with questions about this issue may contact him directly at ARRL HQ at 860-594-0318; e-mail [ehare@arrl.org](mailto:ehare@arrl.org). Additional information is available at <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/rfiteljx.html>

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### **Summer Construction To Be Significant for the Link Alaska Amateur Radio Association**

*by T.J. Tombleson - KB8JXX, President*

First of all, we would like to wish you and all your loved ones a Happy New Year from Link Alaska Amateur Radio Association and the Link Alaska Amateur Radio Network.

This summer looks to be potentially very busy for the Network. There have been several changes that I would like everyone to know about. First off, we now have several new repeater sites available to us. Most of these new sites are part of a deal that we struck with a local land mobile radio company. This company (which will remain un-named for now) wants to expand up towards Denali Park, so they contacted us about the possibility of using our sites. These two sites just happen to be the ones we use to make the Anchorage - Fairbanks link possible. Neither of them have commercial power, but the agreement is that they will provide us power free of charge, in exchange for tower space and access to the site. As an extra incentive, they also agreed to give us access to all the radio sites that they are in as well. Simply put, these are some of the best sites in South Central Alaska.

Another site, through another source completely unrelated, has opened to us recently and is in the Sterling area. A site in this strategic area makes it possible to provide very reliable signals to and from our proposed Kenai Peninsula repeaters and Anchorage. For those of you interested in seeing the network expand on the peninsula, we invite you to do some simple testing for the area for us. A 2 meter / 70 centimeter mobile would be really helpful, because we need test's done on both bands, but the minimum would be a 2 meter test. We haven't had a chance to test this new site specifically, but would be a great help in determining it's usefulness as a relay point for the peninsula. It will also help us determine if we need to keep looking, or help us to know how well the site is going to suit our purposes. It will also help us determine what kind of equipment is going to need for this summer's building projects.

One of our first priorities will be to relocate the tower at our Trapper Creek site. This will allow us to have an equipment

shed with 24 hour access and add more equipment. The shed will be located at the base of the tower, rather than taking up valuable room in our site host's home. It will also keep the wind generator from shaking the house during high winds. Another possible plan is to relocate our Anchorage repeater to one of the higher elevation sites and provide even greater overlapping 2 meter coverage for the Anchorage and the surrounding area.

John Stannard - KL7JL will be setting up a repeater at his place in Anchor Point in a few weeks. We expect to be able to link it into the network, even before the Sterling site is completed. The temporary repeater pair will be 147.06 TX / 147.66 RX, and will be full duplex, but parts of Homer may not be able to "work" the repeater, until we complete our work this summer.

We have made the decision to support and make the Network available to support the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (A.R.E.S.) Planning Committee District 7. We expect they will take advantage of the network's ability to cover much of the state's ham population and use it for exercises and training. The state has 29 districts, and our long range goal is to link to as many of them as possible. We are even looking to establish some radio coverage to communities not on the roadway system. However we are going to need some General Class hams, or higher, to be Control Operators to operate H.F. (High Frequency) to V.H.F. (Very High Frequency) gateways. By combining the two bands, there will be more hams to get involved with the A.R.E.S. work around the state. We are also looking for someone who has a computer and access to the Internet. If either of those opportunities are of interest to you, we would like to hear from you.

On an unrelated topic. I have a 4,000 foot site for an Amateur Television Repeater, if there is equipment available. If you are interested in using this site, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. This will help to start figuring out how to make it compatible with the other equipment at the site. Due to the difficulty of reaching the site, we will be avoiding a second trip up to the site, so everything has to be ready the first time.

For more information please call me at 344-7724. Outside Anchorage, call 1-800-784-7724. My E-mail address is, [kb8jxx@alaska.net](mailto:kb8jxx@alaska.net) Link Alaska Amateur Radio Association T.J. Tombleson - KB8JXX, President

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### ALPHA/POWER BUYS RFCONCEPTS

Alpha/Power, a leading manufacturer of HF linear amplifiers, has purchased the RFconcepts product line of VHF and UHF amplifiers. All service and repairs now are being handled by

Alpha/Power, which is headquartered in Longmont, Colorado. The sale price was not disclosed.

The deal included the RFconcepts name and product line as well as inventory, current and non-current designs and manuals, finished goods, tooling, and vendor and dealer lists. Kantronics President Phil Anderson, W0XI, had announced in September that he was looking for a buyer for the company's RFconcepts product line, saying it "does not fit within our strategic plan for the future." Kantronics had bought the RFconcepts division in 1989 and moved it from California.

For the time being at least, Alpha/Power will continue to market RFconcepts products through the same dealer network. Alpha/Power expects to be manufacturing new products under the RFconcepts name by early 1999. A spokesman said Alpha/Power would be working with Kantronics to ensure a smooth transition. "We feel like it's a really good fit for our product line," he said of the RFconcepts purchase.

For more information, contact Alpha/Power, 14440 Mead Ct, Unit B, Longmont, CO 80504; tel 970-535-4173; <http://www.Alpha-Power-inc.com>.

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### New Jersey amateurs support Jersey Jamboree Newsline

Amateur Radio operators representing a large number of Northern New Jersey radio clubs provided communications support for the recent Jersey Jamboree. This first-time-ever event took place on October 9-11, 1998 and drew close to 10,000 people.

The Jamboree was held at Waterloo Village in Byram, NJ. The primary role played by radio amateurs was to assist police and Emergency Medical Service personnel Scout leaders.

A rather unique aspect of the operation was that it was spread out over three counties. This required significant planning with law enforcement and local officials to ensure the work of the amateur operators was clearly defined and their manpower was properly utilized.

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### DUTCH LOWFER EXPERIMENT FLIES

A serious effort by several Dutch radio amateurs to work as many other LF stations as possible has resulted in QSOs between PA2NIN in The Netherlands and several stations in the UK and Europe on 136 kHz. The original test was scheduled for November 14. Plans called for using a kite-

borne 900-foot antenna, but that day produced no wind. However, the following Saturday, November 21, provided enough wind to loft the wire to about 80 degrees—nearly vertical.

Kite crewmember Richard Middel, PD1AOT, reports the day was cold (-6 degrees C), and windy. "When the kite reached a good height, we tied it to a string of thick nylon cable so the kit would stay there where it was," he said. "It was isolated from ground and it got charged with static electricity." Middel said that within seconds, he and Jeroen, PD1APA, got shocks from built-up static charges. "Sparks were springing from a distance of 2 cm," he said. At that point the antenna was not connected to the transceiver.

The group used a loop antenna and an "active antenna" for receiving, but Nico Nienhuis, PA2NJJ, reports that once the transmitting antenna was in the air, they were unable to receive as well.

The transmitter power was 150 W. Calculations by the Dutch operators estimated the EIRP (effective isotropic radiated power) to be in the range of 10 to 15 W. Stations worked included G3KEV, G3YXM, G4GVC, ON6ND and ON6UX.

PA2NJJ also got reception reports from several European listeners, including France, Germany, Sweden, Scotland, and Italy. Best DX was a listener report from IK5ZPV in Italy, a distance of 1095 km.

Operators at the station in Usquert, The Netherlands, included PE1PFR, PA3GUC, and PA2NJJ. Others who monitored PA2NJJ's experimental operation are requested to send a report to Nico J. Nienhuis, PA2NJJ, Mensingeweersterweg 7, NL 9967 PA Eenrum, The Netherlands.

The ARRL has petitioned the FCC to create two low-frequency Amateur Radio allocations at 136 kHz and at 160 kHz. The League has proposed permitting CW, SSB, RTTY/data, and image emissions for amateurs in a 2.1-kHz "sliver band" from 135.7 to 137.8 kHz and in a 30-kHz segment from 160 to 190 kHz. (See The ARRL Letter, Vol 17, No 44, for November 6, 1998). The League proposed making the two bands available to General and higher licensees.--thanks to Jim Romelfanger, K9ZZ/Badger State Smoke Signals.

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## St. Paul Press looks at Amateur Radio *W0QA, Newsline*

An article published by *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, on November 2, 1998, paints a gloomy picture of the future of Amateur Radio.

The article says Amateur Radio is facing stiff competition in the 21st century telecommunications. Hams are wasting their time debating the finer points of Morse code and federal regulation, as innovations such as PCS telephones, home satellite receivers and Digital Subscriber Lines are threatening to pass them by.

With more than 718,000 licensed amateurs in the U.S. and more than 1.8 million amateurs active overseas, participation in the hobby has been soaring. ARRL membership stands at more than 175,000.

The article notes the amateur population is steadily growing older. The average age of licensed Hams in the U.S. is now 60, and FCC license numbers are down for the first part of 1998.

There's also pressure to squeeze amateurs off the radio dial. It notes a 1993 law directed the FCC to auction off radio frequencies, formerly doled out in lotteries and hearings, and the practice has turned out to be a gold mine for the federal government. With commercial broadcasting, cellular phones, pagers and even garage door openers crowding the spectrum, new radio-based services are ready to pay top dollar for almost any radio real estate.

those who have read the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* article say it's probably the most unbiased assessment of the status of Amateur Radio published in a long, long time.

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## Pope John Paul II, Special Event *Worldradio*

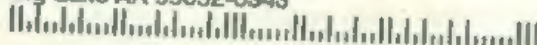
All Amateur Radio clubs of St. Louis, MO will sponsor Special Event Station W0K during the Papal visit of Pope John Paul II, on January 26 & 27, 1999. Operations from the Monsanto Amateur Radio Association shack will be on 10-80 Meters, 24 hours a day. QSL with #10 SASE via KA0IAR, Rev. Mike Dieckmann, 703 Third St. Hillsboro, MO 63050.

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#### CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR HAM PET

Pet hams are so intelligent they often seem human, but they can be difficult to raise. Only someone with great patience should attempt it. In case you do, here is a guide to the basics.

**Living Area** -- A pet ham needs a private nest area, an entire room where it will not be disturbed. Your pet ham will spend many happy hours alone there with its treasures. -- boxes, wires, bits of metal, glass, paper, etc. that it will bring home whenever it ventures out. You will want to encourage your pet ham to confine its activity to this room to prevent the entire house from being subjected to noise, clutter and the boring of holes in the walls.

**Expenses** -- Keeping a pet ham is expensive, but, unlike most common pets, a pet ham can be trained to work outside the home for a few hours each day. It may even bring in enough money to offset its expenses.

**Feeding** -- A well-behaved pet ham will eat with the family occasionally, but it will feed more comfortable and secure taking its meals in the nest room. You must be sure your pet ham is well supplied with food and drink during the long periods it spends alone in there, even if it does not beg or whine.

**Obedience Training** -- A pet ham can be trained to perform simple tricks, the easiest and most common being "sit" and "speak" Do not be alarmed if it practices them for hours at a time in the nest room.

**Health Problems** -- The pet ham typically suffers lower back pain and minor throat irritations from too much sitting and speaking, but health maintenance costs tend to be minimal.

**Travel** -- Your ham pet will gladly travel with your family by car or even by air, if allowed to bring along certain familiar items from the nest room. Most pet hams enjoy trips to places where they can meet pet hams from other families.

**Breeding** -- If you plan to breed your pet ham, you should do so as soon as possible after you get it. As a pet ham matures, it becomes increasingly reluctant to engage in activities not associated with its nest room collection.

Thanks to Ft Herkimer Amaturer Radio Club